

Third-Party Comment on University of Phoenix
Higher Learning Commission
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To Whom It May Concern:

I am an employee at University of Phoenix (UOPX) and I was also a student. I wanted to inform you of several concerns I have about the institution's inability to deliver on its mission statement and other questionable areas. UOPX claims the school “ provides access to higher education opportunities that enable students to develop knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their professional goals, improve the performance of their organizations, and provide leadership and service to their communities. (Internet https://www.phoenix.edu/about_us/about_university_of_phoenix/mission_and_purpose.html) However, in my experience the school saddles the student with a mountain of debt and often the degree has no direct correlation to the student's ability to get employment or increase his/her position. UOPX doesn't even require a copy of a student's high school diploma or GED to start. The student merely has to complete the financial aid request forms and he or she can start a class in as little as 3 days. 3 days is hardly enough time to establish a student's college readiness or establish validity of a potential student's high school diploma or GED. The school does not assess professional goals or how the student will provide leadership to the community or family. The objective that supersedes any student concern is how quickly the student starts class so the school can charge him/her. The cost for tuition is an exorbitant \$1230 per class at the

undergraduate level and there is no placement exam, ability to benefit test or any other measure to gauge if the student is prepared to start college level classes.

I have worked with the University of Phoenix for 13 years and I and several of my co-workers have voiced our concerns to the Higher Learning Commission, Federal Trade Commission as well as the Department of Education at state and federal level but UOPX always seems to talk or politic its way out of addressing the concerns. A major issue expressed to me over the years is the way the Facilitators don't actually teach a lesson plan but merely count the times a student has responded to a question in the classroom. In a traditional classroom a teacher will stand in the front of a class and ask a question as it pertains to the weeks lesson and will wait for response from the student body. At UOPX the question is posted on a site that looks similar to that of Facebook where students can chime in. Answering a question 11 times a week is enough to be considered compliant that week and therefore will be able to maximize points in class. However, there is no proof that the assigned student is doing the work. Plagiarism and cheating are rampant in the school because its impossible to know who is logged into the student's website and posting. More importantly, the Facilitator does not have to respond to student questions or offer and feedback other than a grade. I strongly believe that it is unethical to charge a student \$1230 per class plus \$140 per book and not offer an actual educational lesson. As a result, thousands of students quit every month and are forced to pay for the class directly since financial aid will not pay for the dropped or failed class. When I was a student at the University of Phoenix part of my curriculum

included college algebra which I was excited to take because math was an interest of mine in high school. The first week of class the Facilitator posted a question on the main class page and as student's responded we discovered that the software program that was designated for us to complete the math problems from our text book was not functioning and had no estimated time of availability so the class waited for feedback as to when we could actually start practicing the algebra equations. Each class is only 5 weeks long so every day is extremely valuable in our lesson plan but by week 3 we still had no access to the site where our algebraic equations were to be completed and the Facilitator informed us collectively that we were all going to pass as a result of our troubles. I wasn't pleased with that settlement as I wanted to get an honest grade for honest work I then called tech support to discuss access into the math site but tech support informed me that the site had been down for weeks prior to my class and there was no way to know when it might be working. He informed me that many students called about the same issue and he was confused why UOPX had scheduled algebra classes while the site was down? I thanked him for his time and called my Academic Counselor and she told me to take my A and be glad that this was an easy class. I had not completed one algebraic equation yet I had an A. The teaching and learning is not good enough for the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation. The public expects your due diligence when investigating these concerns and I want to ask that you take the time to get to know how the University of Phoenix enrolls and "teaches" its students before you hand over your approval of their program. The quality of teaching is a

tragedy and criminal at the price of \$410 per credit. UOPX likes to tell their potential students that UOPX offers job assistance as part of their support program. However, its a complete lie! There is no help for students to get a job, no help to prepare for a career in the field of their choice and even the site that was assigned to offer a career search option rarely works. Enrollment counselors are trained to embellish the school's support services when the reality is there are none. I have heard Enrollment counselors tell students that UOPX will assist in resume building, interviewing strategies and preparing for a career but the reality is that its a ploy to build rapport with the student but there are no such support services.

The University of Phoenix offered the Phoenix Academic Achievers Scholarship that would reduce tuition for students based on how many credits a student would transfer into UOPX and based on how many credits a student completes within the school

(Internet

https://www.phoenix.edu/tuition_and_financial_options/scholarships/institutional-scholarships/prospective-students/phoenix-academic-achievers-scholarship.html) but

UOPX neglected to install a system to monitor the progress of students through the scholarship so students were not receiving the scholarship benefits and thousands of disgruntled complaints are called in regularly. Students refer to it as a “bait and switch”. UOPX doesn't care about following through with its promise to the student body what it cares about is accessing the student's financial aid/money.

It is school policy to pressure their Enrollment staff with quotas and this work

philosophy breeds unethical competitions and unethical enrollment practices.

Enrollment is required to enroll anywhere from 8 to 15 students every month otherwise the enrollment rep risks being written up and terminated. Enrollment quotas force staff to do anything they need to in order to stay compliant within policy and it is the wrong way to recruit students.

In summary there are many concerns with the University of Phoenix but I have included the concerns that affect their mission and purpose, quality, teaching and effect on community. We expect that you investigate them thoroughly and pressure them to make immediate changes. Please refrain from giving them positive accreditation until the changes have been made.

Thank you for your time,

Concerned employee